

Opening Statement of the Honorable Fred Upton
Subcommittee on Energy and Power
Hearing on "The American Energy Initiative: A Focus on EPA's
Greenhouse Gas Regulations"
June 19, 2012
(As Prepared for Delivery)

It was nearly three years ago that cap and trade legislation was being voted on by this committee and then by the full House. Few of us who were involved in that debate are likely to ever forget it. As most of you know, I strongly opposed the bill back then, and I must say that I have never for a moment regretted my decision.

Cap and trade was bad news all around – high cost without benefit. Nonetheless, proponents made their case in favor of it, and one of their arguments is very relevant to today's hearing. At the time, EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson and other supporters asserted that enacting cap and trade legislation was a far less costly alternative to piecemeal EPA regulations seeking to achieve the same ends.

Now I certainly did not agree with the logic that we should pass a bad global warming bill in order to avoid worse regulations, but Administrator Jackson was right about one thing – as awful as cap and trade energy taxes would have been, the agency's greenhouse gas regulations are looking even worse. And EPA has only begun to roll out this regulatory agenda.

We are already seeing the agency's greenhouse gas permitting requirements acting as one more roadblock to the economic recovery and to job growth. It's a sad irony that the very job creating activities this struggling economy screams out for – things like building a new factory or expanding an existing one, or boosting electric generating capacity to meet demand – are precisely what is being targeted by EPA with these burdensome GHG permit requirements. And this new red tape is above and beyond the long list of other measures imposed under the Clean Air Act and other statutes.

And there will be more to follow, including New Source Performance Standards for GHGs from coal-fired power plants and refineries.

It is not only the largest employers who are at risk – we are seeing signs of EPA's GHG regulatory actions reverberating throughout the economy. Even smaller businesses and farmers that are not directly regulated – at least not yet – are going to have to deal with the higher energy costs that will be passed on to them by those who are.

Today, we have a valuable opportunity to listen to the job creators, both large and small, who have serious concerns with many aspects of EPA's greenhouse gas agenda. I was proud to partner with Representative Whitfield, Senator Inhofe, and many others – on both sides of the aisle – to address those concerns in H.R. 910, the Energy Tax Prevention Act. And I look forward to continued discussions to ensure a pro-jobs, pro-growth, and pro-energy future for America.

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